

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 342

Recognizing the Republic of Croatia for its progress in strengthening democratic institutions, respect for human rights, and the rule of law and recommending the integration of Croatia into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 21, 2005

Mr. VOINOVICH (for himself, Mr. HAGEL, and Mr. BIDEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the Republic of Croatia for its progress in strengthening democratic institutions, respect for human rights, and the rule of law and recommending the integration of Croatia into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Whereas the United States recognized the Republic of Croatia on April 7, 1992, acknowledging the decision of the people of Croatia to live in an independent, democratic, and sovereign country;

Whereas since achieving their independence, the people of Croatia have dedicated themselves to building a functioning democratic society, based on the rule of law, respect for human rights, and a free market economy;

Whereas Croatia has made progress in judicial reform and has adopted a judicial reform strategy;

Whereas Croatia has demonstrated a desire to protect minority rights and promote a viable multiethnic society;

Whereas, in 2002, Croatia adopted the Constitutional Law on the Rights of National Minorities, ensuring the representation of minorities in the Parliament of Croatia and the establishment of the councils of national minorities;

Whereas the Government of Croatia has concluded specific bilateral agreements on the protection of minority rights with Hungary, Italy, and Serbia and Montenegro and has concluded an agreement on cooperation with representatives of the Independent Democratic Serb Party in the Parliament of Croatia;

Whereas three prominent members of the Parliament of Croatia, Ratko Gajica, Milorad Pupovac, and Vojislav Stanimirovic, who represent the Serb minority, sent a letter to the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Stephen Hadley, expressing their support for the Prime Minister of Croatia, Ivo Sanader, and for Croatia's path toward membership in the European Union and in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization ("NATO");

Whereas Croatia has shown dedication to advancing the return, reconstruction, and restitution of property in Croatia;

Whereas Croatia has proven to be a reliable partner of the United States in seeking the stabilization of the region;

Whereas Croatia participated in the Iraq International Conference held in Brussels on June 22, 2005, and offered

to train and educate nationals of Iraq at universities in Croatia;

Whereas Croatia is taking part in the training of Iraqi security forces at the International Training Center in Jordan and has offered to train additional security personnel for Iraq in Croatia;

Whereas Croatia has been a partner in the war against terrorism, sent troops to Afghanistan as part of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force in support of the war against terrorism in 2002, and has provided civilians to staff the Provincial Reconstruction Team under the leadership of NATO in Fayzabad;

Whereas, during July 2005, Croatia adopted a decision to triple its military presence in the International Security Assistance Force;

Whereas Croatia has endorsed and is participating in the Proliferation Security Initiative with like-minded nations across the world to prevent the flow of weapons of mass destruction, missile systems, and related material;

Whereas, on June 1, 2005, Croatia was the fourth nation to sign the Proliferation Security Initiative Shipboarding Agreement with the United States to prevent the maritime transfer of dangerous shipments of weapons or other illicit materials to keep such weapons and materials out of the hands of dangerous actors and terrorists;

Whereas, since Croatia has become an independent country, the United States has shown support for Croatia in many ways, including by providing Croatia with economic and military assistance that has contributed significantly to the progress and continued success occurring in Croatia;

Whereas the United States has encouraged Croatia's transformation and the future membership of Croatia in NATO;

Whereas a whole and free Europe cannot be fully achieved without the integration into NATO of all countries that share the common values of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights;

Whereas the Membership Action Plan developed for NATO, which was launched in April 1999, is a program of assistance that provides both goals and a roadmap for countries aspiring to membership in NATO;

Whereas Croatia was invited into the Membership Action Plan in May 2002 and has made substantial progress toward the achievement of the reforms required for receiving an invitation to start accession talks with NATO;

Whereas the United States, Croatia, Albania, and Macedonia are signatories to the United States-Adriatic Charter for Partnership, which promotes Euro-Atlantic integration and commits the signatory nations to the values and principles of NATO and to membership in NATO at the earliest possible time;

Whereas Croatia supports regional cooperation as a means of bringing stability to Europe, particularly Southeast Europe, and has cooperated with the countries that neighbor Croatia to promote such stability, including providing technical and other assistance to countries that seek membership in the European Union;

Whereas, on October 3, 2005, the European Union decided to open accession negotiations with Croatia based on the assessment of the European Union's Council of Ministers that Croatia met the political and economic criteria for

candidacy in the European Union, including that Croatia was fully cooperating with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia;

Whereas the cooperation between the Government of Croatia and the Tribunal improved significantly under Prime Minister Ivo Sanader;

Whereas, since November 2003, Croatia has handed over to the Tribunal eleven individuals indicted for war crimes;

Whereas the cooperation of the Government of Croatia with the Tribunal assisted in the arrest of Ante Gotovina on December 8, 2005, in Spain and his transfer to the Tribunal on December 10, 2005;

Whereas the success of the Government of Croatia in bringing war criminals to justice demonstrates the commitment of the Government to move Croatia toward a brighter future of peace, stability, and prosperity for its people; and

Whereas Croatia shares the common interests and values of the free and democratic world: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) since the Republic of Croatia became an
3 independent country, the Government and people of
4 Croatia have made significant progress in strengthening
5 democratic institutions, respect for human
6 rights, and the rule of law in Croatia;

7 (2) Croatia’s membership in the North Atlantic
8 Treaty Organization (“NATO”) would contribute to
9 stability in Southeast Europe;

1 (3) it is the sense of the Senate that—

2 (A) the Government and people of Croatia
3 should be commended for their progress on pro-
4 tecting minority rights in Croatia, progress to-
5 ward achieving the political, economic, military,
6 and other requirements of NATO's Membership
7 Action Plan, contribution to the International
8 Security Assistance Force and the war against
9 terrorism, and for their constructive participa-
10 tion in the Proliferation Security Initiative and
11 in the United States-Adriatic Charter;

12 (B) the Government of Croatia should be
13 commended for its cooperation with the Inter-
14 national Criminal Tribunal for the former
15 Yugoslavia which led to the apprehension and
16 transfer of several individuals indicted for war
17 crimes, including Ante Gotovina, to the Tri-
18 bunal;

19 (C) the Government of Croatia should con-
20 tinue its cooperation with the Tribunal;

21 (D) the Government of Croatia should con-
22 tinue and strengthen its role as a partner on
23 nonproliferation and its support in the war
24 against terrorism and in Iraq;

1 (E) the Government of Croatia should con-
2 tinue its efforts to implement defense reforms;
3 and

4 (F) the Government of the United States
5 should continue and increase its defense and se-
6 curity cooperation with the Government of Cro-
7 atia, including through education, training, and
8 technical cooperation, to assist Croatia in the
9 reform process and in fulfilling its requirements
10 for membership in NATO; and

11 (4) upon complete satisfaction of the criteria
12 for NATO membership, in accordance with NATO's
13 guidelines, Croatia should be invited to be a full
14 member of NATO at the earliest possible date.

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